

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02

SS-15 ICA-11 HA-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 MCT-01 /096 W

-----021433 230218Z /70

R 221450Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9322

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 5972

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: US, AO, IV

SUBJECT: HOUPHOUET'S REACTION TO U.S. CONTACTS IN ANGOLA

REF: (A) ABIDJAN 5915; (B) STATE 156359

1. FOREIGN MINISTER AKE TELEPHONED ME YESTERDAY EVENING TO

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SAY THAT HE HAD DECIDED NOT TO WAIT UNTIL HE GOT TO PARIS

TODAY TO INFORM HOUPHOUET THAT U.S. REPRESENTATIVES WERE IN

LUANDA. AKE HAD, THEREFORE, TALKED WITH HOUPHOUET BY PHONE

AND THE PRESIDENT HAD ASKED HIM TO GET BACK IN TOUCH WITH ME

TO CONVEY HOUPHOUET'S REACTION.

2. HOUPHOUET WANTED US TO KNOW THAT HE APPRECIATED OUR

GESTURE OF INFORMING HIM "IN ADVANCE" OF MCHENRY MISSION.
(COMMENT: THIS WAS A RATHER GENEROUS WAY OF DESCRIBING
OUR ACTION SINCE, I HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY LEARNED, RADIO
ANGOLA HAD ALREADY ANNOUNCED NEWS MONDAY EVENING, JUN 19.)
AS WE KNEW, HOUPHOUET FAVORED KEEPING LINES OF
COMMUNICATION OPEN TO LUANDA AND HAD HIMSELF EXCHANGED
VIEWS DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY WITH ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT.
HOUPHOUET DID NOT REPEAT NOT CONSIDER NETO A LOST CAUSE.
HOUPHOUET BELIEVED ON GOOD AUTHORITY THAT NETO WAS
UNCOMFORTABLE WITH SOVIET AND CUBAN PRESSURE AND WAS
LOOKING FOR WAYS TO INCREASE HIS FREEDOM OF MANEUVER.

3. IN HOUPHOUET'S VIEW, IT WAS NATURAL THAT ANGOLANS
AND OTHER LUSOPHONE AFRICANS WOULD BE DISTRUSTFUL OF
EUROPE AND THE U.S.. NEITHER NATO AS AN ORGANIZATION NOR
NATO COUNTRIES INDIVIDUALLY HAVE MADE ANY REAL EFFORT
TO CONVINCE PORTUGAL OF THE IMPORTANCE OF FACILITATING
PROGRESS TOWARD INDEPENDENCE OF ITS AFRICAN COLONIES.
THEREFORE, THE WEST INEVITABLY LOST INFLUENCE OVER THE
LIBERATION MOVEMENTS AND WHEN INDEPENDENCE WAS FINALLY
ACHIEVED, COMMUNIST STATES LIKE THE SOVIET UNION AND
CUBA WERE VIEWED AS FAVORED FRIENDS.

4. NEVERTHELESS, SAID AKE, HOUPHOUET BELIEVED THESE
PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL DISADVANTAGES COULD BE
OVERCOME AND FOR THIS REASON SUPPORTED EFFORTS BY
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THE U.S. AND EUROPEAN POWERS TO ENCOURAGE ANGOLA TO
ADOPT A TRULY NON-ALIGNED COURSE. HE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN
LEARNING OUR ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION IN ANGOLA AFTER
THE COMPLETION OF THE MCHENRY VISIT.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH OUR CONSULTATION WITH THE
IVORIANS CAME LATE ENOUGH TO LOOK LIKE AN
AFTERTHOUGHT, IT WAS WORTH DOING AND I THINK
HOUPHOUET WAS SINCERE IN SAYING THAT HE APPRECIATED
THE GESTURE. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, HE HAS ON
SEVERAL OCCASIONS DURING THE LAST YEAR INFORMED
US ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS OF HIS CONTACTS WITH LUANDA.
THE FIRST OF THESE OCCURRED A YEAR AGO DURING THE
LIBREVILLE SUMMIT MEETING ON THE OAU. BOTH AS A
COURTESY TO HOUPHOUET AND BECAUSE HE CAN BE HELPFUL
TO US, I URGE THAT WE TAKE SERIOUSLY HIS EXPRESSION
OF INTEREST IN THE RESULTS OF THE MCHENRY MISSION.
BY KEEPING HOUPHOUET INFORMED OF OUR EFFORTS TO
IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE SO-CALLED AFRICAN RADICALS,
WE CAN, AT A MINIMUM, ASSURE OURSELVES OF THE UNDER-
STANDING OF A LEADING MODERATE.
STEARNS

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